
Health Care Committee

HB 1689

Brief Description: Concerning dental health services.

Sponsors: Representatives Cody, Moeller, Appleton, Morrell, Clibborn, Green, Kenney, Murray, Schual-Berke and Chase.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a postdoctoral dental residency program that may replace practical examination requirements necessary for obtaining a license to practice dentistry.
- Removes a tax exemption for health care service contractors that provide coverage for dental care services.

Hearing Date: 2/18/05

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Licenses to Practice Dentistry

Applicants for a license to practice dentistry in Washington must present evidence of graduation from a dental school approved by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) and pass an examination approved by the Commission. The examination consists of both written and practical components. The practical component is met through the Western Regional Examining Board's clinical examination which must be completed within five years of applying for a license.

Health Services Account

Every year health care service contractors are required to pay two percent of all premiums and prepayments for health care services to the Office of the Insurance Commissioner. The funds collected are deposited in the Health Services Account. The Health Services Account is an appropriated account that may be used for purposes related to access to health services for low-income residents; the public health system; maintenance and expansion of the capacity of the health care system; the containment of health care costs; and the regulation and administration of the health care system.

Summary of Bill:

An applicant for a license to practice dentistry may replace the practical examination requirement for obtaining a license by satisfactorily completing a postdoctoral residency program in a

community health clinic that serves predominantly low-income patients or is located in a dental care health professional shortage area in Washington. The residency must last for at least one year and must be approved by the Commission. The Commission, with the recommendations of the School of Dentistry of the University of Washington, must establish criteria for the sponsoring clinics to use when sponsoring residents, including guidelines for supervising and evaluating residents.

Tax exemptions that cover prepayments for dental care services are removed so that health care service contractors are required to pay the tax.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 9, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.